

Attendees: Lauri Bridgeforth (Chair), Terry Bohan, Beau Correll, Scott Dawson, Cory Garman, Mark Lore, Downtown Manager: Jennifer Bell. **Guests:** Chief Baldwin, Winchester Fire and Rescue; Brad Belo, VA Main Street Community Revitalization Specialist. **Absent:** Marilyn Finnemore, Melinda Kramer, Rick McClendon, Andrea Smith and Susan Touchette. (Notes taken by Sarah Acuff Chapman)

- **Call to Order**

- Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes – approved unanimously. Request to indicate “unanimously” when a motion is passed instead of noting how many in favor.
- Expenditures Report – Question regarding \$12,000 in the red in Other Operating Supplies. Answer: Overage largely due to the Old Town Welcome Center which is something we had to get an additional request from our fund balance for the additional expenses. OTDB already voted to pay for those expenses.

- **Chief Baldwin Presentation**

- Lauri – The OTDB made a recommendation to the planning commission that the measurement of 15 ft. for patio seating be increased to 17 ft. Just this week learned that there is a public safety issue. Chief Baldwin invited to present to the OTDB regarding this issue.
- Chief Baldwin – Fire Department did approve the mall designs and fire lane as well as 15’ area for patios. However, an addition of 2 ft. to patio fencing area will reduce in total 4 ft. usable clear zone. His concerns include:
 - Limited area makes it difficult for apparatus and EMS.
 - Need operational space
 - Portable fences and a-frame signs take time to move – causing delays in response time
 - During events, vendors creep out into fire lane
 - Year round issue – winter snow piles up thereby reducing usable space.
 - Difficult to walk around trucks and equipment when deployed near fences
 - Irregular spacing of planters means it takes time to weave between them. Fencing makes it even harder.
 - Need to maintain the fire lane.
 - Zoning Dept. has to handle compliance.
- Board members asked questions and discussed aspects of the issue including importance of representing stakeholder concerns and allowing fencing which extended 17’ already to remain in place.
- **Motion to rescind the motion from last month to extend the barrier for new fencing to 17 ft. 2nd. Add “Based on information the we now have from the Winchester Fire Department, we move to rescind...”. 3 in favor. 4 opposed. Motion does not pass.**

- **Chair Updates** – Lauri Bridgeforth

- ArtScape banners are up. Worked with SAC for new design. Future plans to perhaps change locations.
- Branding – no objections at city council meeting. Task Force will reconvene to review roll out and suggestions for business use. Logo shared with Dario to add to events. OT Website updates will proceed.
- Meals Tax – City Council finalizing FY15 budget. Potential 1% increase in meals tax. Recommendations for council? Ask if there is any other avenue besides restaurants. Development has focused a lot on restaurants. Will tax affect business? Some people question the tax. Potential issue in the future. Roanoke has 12% meals tax. Winchester would be the second highest in the state. Frederick County has a lower tax. Meals and lodging taxes visitors. Meals in Winchester taxing city and county, residents and

visitors. We represent stakeholders. One appeal of Old Town is restaurants. Not cigarettes... increase that tax. Feel strongly enough about issue to make a recommendation? **Motion that the OTDB is not in favor of a meals tax increase and would recommend that Council look at other areas given the recognition that restaurants form the backbone of Old Town area. 2nd. Passed unanimously.**

- **Committee/ Work Plan Updates**

- Organization – Rick - absent
- Design – Cory
 - Met with Tim Youmans regarding Civil War signage for the Taylor Hotel. Will meet with Tim and Perry to discuss placement.
 - Façade Grant – officially awarded. Jennifer working on publicizing. Committee working on criteria for applicants. Any suggestions, please contact Cory.
 - Signage at events – event policy. For example, signs can't go in planters. Going to look at the physical implications in terms of the aesthetic impact.
- Promotions – Mark
 - Not meet because of Apple Blossom.
- Economic Restructuring – Scott
 - Not meet this month.

- **VA Main Street Presentation – Brad Belo**

- Presentation on the history of Main Streets and the role it plays in Virginia. Emphasis on the individual committees and their responsibilities and the economic impact of Main Streets Communities.
- VMS Training here in Winchester Sept 9 & 10.

- **Downtown Manager's Updates – Jennifer**

- Welcome Center: over 1000 visitors to date. Welcome Center Volunteers help during Apple Blossom. Events – KidzFest coming up. Invite board members to come volunteer or observe.
- Stakeholder mailing. Dual purpose. AB info and way to contact residents and business without email. E-newsletter.
- Stakeholder meeting May 21. Business captains, please do outreach to invite to meeting.
- Business Captain, reach out, ask if getting newsletter, get email if not.

- **OTWBA – Christine Patrick, President**

- 4000 eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt. Thank you for the 2000 eggs donated. Division of ages worked well.
- Rally in the Alley was really great neighborhood party. \$1500 split between Downtown Foundation and OTWBA.
- Branding – return to OTWBA meeting to ask questions about use, etc.
- Fire Lane – not trying to add feet, just to have ordinance reflect current placements.

- **Public Comments – none**

- **Adjournment at 7:26 p.m.** Next meeting –**Thursday, June 5** at 5:30 p.m., Rouss City Hall, 4th Floor Exhibit Hall